

RELATIONSHIPS

1 Thess 5:15-17

1. Offensive people.

1 Th 5:15 Don't pay back or get even *Evil*: Bad & harmful words & deeds;

Follow after. Pursue, practice, seek after that which is good. All the time and in all places

Always demonstrate kindness Heb 12:14

Don't be vengeful! Rom 12:19; Prov 25:21,22; Rom 12:21

none render evil for evil ,,, Don't carry a chip on your shoulder. Don't have a "get even" mentality.

Follow that which is good.. Do something that will benefit others.

Luke 6:27-29 How do I treat :

- ◆ Enemies- *Love*
 - ◆ Them which hate me--*do good*
 - ◆ Them that curse me--*Bless*
 - ◆ Them That use me--*pray*
 - ◆ Physically threatens me and steals from me-- ... *offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also.*
- 1 Pet 3:9 Lev 19:18 Prov 20:22 Prov 24:29

2. Life's Circumstances. Life in general.

1 Th 5:16 *Rejoice evermore.* Rejoice all the time.

Learned that

- Can't depend on circumstances for happiness.
- Can't depend on people for happiness.
- Basis for real joy is personal relationship with Jesus Christ! Phil 4:4

Why rejoice evermore? Rom 8:28

As a child of God I can rejoice in every circumstance of life:

- Famine Hab 3:17-18
- Persecution Acts 5:41
- Imprisonment Acts 16:23, 25
- Poverty 2 Cor 6:10
- Loss of Material Goods Heb 10:34
- Trials and Afflictions 1 Pet 4:12-13

Let me say a couple things about Joy in the Christian's life before going on to verse 17.

1. Real joy only comes from God. Gal 5:22-23
2. Joy is different than happiness.

Demarest: "*The basis of joy is Jesus Himself.*"

3. God. Relationship to God? **1 Th 5:17** *Pray without ceasing.*

J.B.Lightfoot: *It is not in the moving of the lips, but in the elevation of the heart to God, that the essence of prayer consists.*

Demarest: *To pray without ceasing establishes prayer, not as a part of the Christian life, but as all of it.*

Henri Nouwen *to think and live in the presence of God"* (p.70).

Living lives with a growing awareness that God is always present.

Demarest: *It is to grow in our openness to God – to bring consciously all of our words and deeds into His presence.*

To get to the place of unceasing prayer

1. Conversion.
2. Clear Conscience.
3. Consistent seasons of intentional prayer.
4. Consistent times of Meditation on the Word
5. Commitment to Obeying God

Pray without ceasing:

Practice the presence of God

Keep the receiver off the hook

Stay online

So What?

How do I handle offensive people? Pay back? Get even? Do something that will benefit others?

What is the source of my joy? Rejoice evermore -16; Can't depend on circumstances or people. The basis for real joy is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Have I learned to think and live in the presence of God? Pray without ceasing.